

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 OPR-02 SY-05 OC-05 CCO-00 A-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 SAM-01 EB-07 SCCT-01 SCS-03 SCA-01 FS-01 /085 W

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FM AMCONSUL LUANDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3871

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

CINCLANT NORFOLK VA

CINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LUANDA 1001

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AEMR MILI PINT PINS AO

SUBJECT: EVACUATION ASSESSEMENT

SUMMARY: REQUEST FOR FIRM COMMITMENT ON LEAD TIME FOR EVACUATION
AIRCRAFT.

1. THE UNITED KINGDOM HAS EVACUATED ALL THOSE OF ITS NATIONALS
THAT WANTED TO GO AND THE ENTIRE STAFF OF THE CONSULATE GENERAL,
WHICH IS NOW IN THE CUSTODIAL CARE OF THE LOCAL EMPLOYEES. FOR
LACK OF ANY SOLID INFORMATION ON WHICH TO MAKE THEIR OWN
ASSESSMENTS, THE CONSUL GENERAL OF FRANCE, AUSTRIA, BELGIUM,
GERMANY AND ITALY HAVE DECIDED THEY SHOULD BE GUIDED BY THE
BRITISH EXAMPLE AND HAVE RECOMMENDED TO THEIR GOVERNMENTS THAT
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A JET AIR CRAFT BE JOINTLY CHARTERED TO TAKE OUT THEIR NATIONALS

ON JULY 30. THEIR LOGIC IS THAT IF THE BRITISH HAVE EVACUATED THEY MUST HAVE HAD A REASON FOR DOING SO; THEREFORE, THEY, TOO, MUST TAKE SOME ACTION BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE. THE EUROPEANS ALSO HAD THE MISTAKEN NOTION THAT THE U.S. HAD EVACUATED ITS NATIONALS.;

2. AS FAR AS I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DETERMINE, THE BRITISH EVACUATION WAS THE RESULT OF SELF INDUCED PANIC. THE BRITISH CONSULATE HERE APPARENTLY REPORTED TO LONDON ON JULY 26 THAT THE FNLA WAS 12 MILES FROM LUANDA AND WOULD PROBABLY ENTER THE CITY BY NOON OF JULY 27, AN UNFOUNDED RUMOR THAT WAS WIDELY BELIEVED. THE FOREIGN OFFICE ACCEPTED THE REPORT AT FACE VALUE AND DECIDED IT HAD TO ACT IMMEDIATELY IN ORDER TO PROTECT BRITISH SUBJECTS AND THE CONSULATE STAFF.

3. AS FOR FACTS, WE HAVE FEW. THE FNLA IS IN THE TOWN OF CAXITO, SOME FIFTY TO SIXTY KILOMETERS NORTH OF LUANDA. FNLA PRESIDENT HOLDEN ROBERTO HAS ANNOUNCED HIS INTENTION OFFENTERING THE CITY AND MPLA HAS DIRECTED PEOPLES POWER AND ALL MPLA ACTIVISTS IN LUANDA TO MOBILIZE FOR THE EXPECTED ASSAULT. I WILL REPORT THESE DECLARATIONS IN DETAIL WHEN TIME TIME PERMITS, BUT FOR THE MOMENT IT IS ENOUGH TO KNOW THAT THE TWO ORGANIZATIONS HAVE FOR THE FIRST TIME VIRTUALLY DECLARED WAR ON EACH OTHER. FNLA AND MPLA LEADERS HAVE LEFT THE CITY, OR GONE INTO HIDING IN ANTICIPATION OF FIERCE FIGHTING. AGOSTINHO NETO AND HIS FAMILY HAVE LEFT THEIR NEW HOME SOUTH OF THE CITY AND ONLY A FEW FNLA LEADERS REMAIN HERE.

4. FIRSTLY, FNLA COULD BREAK THROUGH AND ENTER THE CITY. IF THEY DO, I EXPECT GENERALIZED FIGHTING, INDISCRIMINATE FNLA REPRISALS AGAINST THE POPULACE, AND THE FLIGHT OF LARGE NUMBERS OF BLACKS TO THE INNER CITY. LOOTING WILL ENSUE AND PROBABLY SCATTERED ATTACKS ON WHITES BY EMBITTERED MPLA ADHERENTS. FOREIGN CONSULATES WILL BE A TARGET AND ESPECIALLY THE AMERICAN IN REVENGE FOR IMAGINED U.S. SUPPORT TO THE FNLA. WHILE NOT IMPREGNABLE, WE ARE IN A GOOD POSITION, WITH QUARTERS ON THE FOURTEENTH FLOOR OF AN OFFICE BUILDING. WE HAVE EMERGENCY POWER, C-RATIONS, WATER, TEAR GAS, AND COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE OUTSIDE. OUR PREMISES CAN ACCOMODATE FOR A FEW DAYS THOSE U.S. CITIZENS LEFT IN THE CITY. SECONDLY, MPLA MIGHT STYMIE FNLA ATTEMPTS TO ENTER THE CITY. IN THAT EVENTUALITY, WE MUST WORRY

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ABOUT FNLA ATTEMPTS TO FORCE SUBMISSION BY CUTTING OFF WATER AND POWER. THE AQUEDUCT THAT SUPPLIES WATER TO THE CITY LIES NOT FAR FROM CAXITO AND COULD BE READILY CUT. POWER LINES AND TRANSFORMERS ARE ALSO WITHIN REACH OF FNLA FORCES. FNLA LEADERS HAVE SPOKEN PRIVATELY OF JUST SUCH A TACTIC IF THEY CANNOT FORCE THEIR WAY INTO LUANDA.

5. IN THE EVENT OF AN FNLA SIEGE AND A CUTOFF OF WATER AND POWER,

AMERICAN CITIZENS WOULD NEED TO BE EVACUATED. EVACUATION WOULD ALSO BE JUSTIFIED IF FNLA GOT CLOSE TO THE CITY BECAUSE WE WOULD HAVE NO IDEA HOW LONG THE FIGHTING WOULD LAST. IF IT WENT ON FOR SOME DAYS, AS I EXPECT IT WOULD, FOOD SUPPLIES WOULD DWINDLE.

6. THE THIRD POSSIBILITY IS THAT MPLA WILL PUSH FNLA BACK AND THE CITY WILL NOT ONLY BE ENDANGERED, BUT THERE WILL BE LITTLE CHANCE THAT ANYONE COULD CUT WATER, POWER, OR FOOD SUPPLIES. AT THE PRESENT MOMENT, NO ONE CAN SAY WHAT IS LIKELY TO HAPPEN. THE HIGH COMMISSIONER HAS TOLD ME THAT HE DOES NOT BELIEVE FNLA CAN PUSH FORWARD TO LUANDA, BUT HE HAS BEEN WRONG ON SO OFTEN IN THE PAST IN HIS ASSESSMENTS THAT I PUT NO FAITH IN HIS PREDICTIONS. HE AND I HAVE AN EXCELLENT RELATIONSHIP, AND HE TALKS FRANKLY TO ME, BUT HE HAS VERY LIMITED INFORMATION ABOUT THE CAPABILITIES OR INTENTIONS OF THE OPPOSING FORCES. HE HAS TOLD ME ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, AND I HAVE SO REPORTED, THAT HE HAS LITTLE INTELLIGENCE AND MOST OF THAT IS NOT GOOD.

7. A FOURTH POSSIBILITY IS THAT THERE WILL BE A MEXICAN STANDOFF AND THE FNLA AND MPLA WILL AGREE UPON A MODUS VIVENDI THAT WOULD ALLOW FNLA TO REOCCUPY ITS HEADQUARTERS IN LUANDA. AT THIS WRITING, SUCH A DEVELOPMENT SEEMS REMOTE. BOTH SIDES ARE DETERMINED UPON A SETTLEMENT BY FORCE OF ARMS AND WILL ONLY AGREE TO A POLITICAL SOLUTION WHEN THEY ARE EXHAUSTED; NOT ENOUGH BLOOD HAS BEEN SHED TO CAUSE THEM TO THINK IN TERMS OF ACCOMODATION. THERE DO EXIST SOME HOPEFUL ELEMENTS HERE; NONE OF THE THREE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS WANTS TO BE CUT OUT OF THE LEVERS OF POWER OR ACCESS TO THE NATIONAL TREASURY. THESE TWO FACTORS REPRESENT THE GLUE THAT HAS HELD THE GOVERNMENT, SUCH AS IT IS, TOGETHER THROUGH FRATRICIDAL BATTLES OVER THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS. THEY ARE WILLING TO TALK DESPITE THEIR ENMITIES BECAUSE THE STAKES ARE SO HIGH. STILL, PRIDE, DESIRE FOR REVENGE, TRIBAL DIFFERENCES AND PERSONAL HATREDS SEEM TO HAVE TAKEN PRECEDENCE OVER ANY

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OTHER CONSIDERATION.

8. WE MUST NOW CONSIDER THE ASSETS AT OUR DISPOSAL, NEGATIVE FACTORS AND THE COURSE OF ACTION OPEN TO US. THE PRESENCE OF PORTUGUESE FORCES IS AN ASSET IN THAT THEY CAN BE EXPECTED IN THE EVENT OF GENERALIZED FIGHTING IN LUANDA TO SET UP SOME KIND OF A PERIMETER DEFENSE THAT WOULD INCLUDE THE INNER CITY AND THE AIRPORT. THE PRINCIPAL NEGATIVE FACTOR IS THE INABILITY TO LEAVE HERE BY AIR; ALL AIRLINES ARE BOOKED FOR MONTHS AND HUNDREDS OF WHITES WITH CONFIRMED RESERVATIONS ARE CAMPING AT THE AIRPORT. THE SHORTAGE OF JET FUEL MAKES THE SITUATION FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE PRACTICALLY HOPELESS. THIS FACTOR IS BALANCED BY THE WILLINGNESS OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO SEND IN A CHARTERED COMMERCIAL OR MILITARY AIRCRAFT ON SHORT NOTICE TO EVACUATE U.S. CITIZENS.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 LUANDA 1001

9. THE COURSES OF ACTION OPEN TO US ARE IMMEDIATELY TO ORDER THE EVACUATION OF AMERICAN CITIZENS FROM LUANDA, OR TO WAIT FOR THE DENOUEMENT, WHICH COULD BE ONE OF THE FOUR I HAVE OUTLINED ABOVE. I SUGGEST WE WAIT A BIT TO SEE JUST HOW THE SITUATION DEVELOPS. I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT WE WILL BE DENIED ACCESS TO THE AIRPORT SO QUICKLY THAT WE CANNOT EVACUATE AMERICANS. ONCE A TREND BECOMES CLEAR I WILL RECOMMEND A COURSE OF ACTION. MEANWHILE, I HAVE PUT THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY HERE ON AN EVACUATION FOOTING. RATHER THAN TRY AND CONTACT ALL NATIONALS, WHICH IS A USELESS VENTURE AS MANY DO NOT HAVE TELEPHONES, I AM ASKING ALL OF THEM TO CALL IN AT LEAST ONCE A DAY TO OBTAIN AN ASSESSMENT AND INSTRUCTIONS. AS SOON AS I PERCEIVE THAT EVACUATION IS IN ORDER I WILL TELL THEM TO MARSHAL AT THE CONSULATE AND CONCURRENTLY REQUEST THE DEPARTMENT TO SEND IN AN AIRPLANE TO

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TAKE THEM OUT. I DO NOT AT THIS WRITING PLAN TO CLOSE THE CONSULATE, ALTHOUGH I MAY SEND OUT MOST EMPLOYEES. IN THE WORST POSSIBLE CASE, A COMMUNICATOR AND I WILL BE ABLE TO HANDLE THE NEEDS OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HERE.

10. WHAT I NEED FROM THE DEPARTMENT WITHIN THE NEXT FEW HOURS IS A FIRM ESTIMATE ON THE LEAD TIME NEEDED TO GET A PLANE HERE. ONCE I HAVE THAT I WILL BE IN A BETTER POSITION TO DETERMINE AT WHAT POINT I HAVE TO MAKE MY DECISION. THE CRAFT SHOULD ARRIVE WITH SUFFICIENT FUEL TO BE ABLE TO MAKE IT TO THE SAFEHAVEN POINT.

11. I HAVE CABLED THE AMERICANS LIVING OUTSIDE LUANDA TO SAY THAT IN THE EVENT OF AN EVACUATION FROM LUANDA THE CONSULATE WILL REMAIN OPEN AND THAT IF EVACUATION BECOMES NECESSARY IN THE CENTER AND SOUTH WE WILL SET UP OPERATIONS IN NOVA LISBOA TO COORDINATE ANOTHER EVACUATION.

12. ACTION REQUIRED. PER PARAGRAPH EIGHT ABOVE, PLEASE CABLE ME A FIRM ESTIMATE ON LEAD TIME REQUIRED TO GET A PLANE TO LUANDA.
KILLORAN

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